

Message Text

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P 280629Z AUG 75
FM SECSTATE WASHDC
TO AMEMBASSY ROME PRIORITY
AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS PRIORITY
AMEMBASSY COPENHAGEN PRIORITY
AMEMBASSY DUBLIN PRIORITY
AMEMBASSY LUXEMBOURG PRIORITY

S E C R E T STATE 204811

EXDIS

FOL LONDON 13154 SENT ACTION SECSTATE INFO BONN THE HAGUE
PARIS LISBON EC BRUSSELS NATO BRUSSELS AUG 26; REPEATED
TO YOU QUOTE

S E C R E T LONDON 13154

EXDIS

DEPARTMENT PASS USDEL SECRETARY'S PARTY

E.O. 11652: XGDS-1
TAGS: PFOR, SREF, EAID, UK
SUBJECT: PORTUGUESE POLITICAL CRISIS AND ALLIED DEMARCHES

REF: STATE 202520

1. IN THE ABSENCE OF FOREIGN SECRETARY CALLAGHAN AND
MINISTER OF STATE ROY HATTERSLEY, MINISTER SPIERS CALLED
SECRET

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ON FCO PERMANENT UNDER SECRETARY BRIMELOW THIS MORNING,
AUGUST 26, TO MAKE DEMARCHE CONTAINED REFTEL. BRIMELOW
WAS ACCOMPANIED BY RICHARD BAKER, DEPUTY HEAD OF SOUTHERN
EUROPEAN DEPARTMENT, WHO IS KEY FCO ACTION OFFICER ON
PORTUGUESE SITUATION. SPIERS PRESENTED BRIMELOW AND

BAKER WITH AIDE MEMOIRE CONTAINING KEY TALKING POINTS
PARAGRAPHS 3 AND 4 REFTEL.

2. AFTER HEARING OUT MINISTER SPIERS AND STUDYING TALKING POINTS, BRIMELOW BEGAN BY AFFIRMING THAT FOREIGN SECRETARY CALLAGHAN CERTAINLY DOES WANT TO HELP TO ESTABLISH A MODERATE GOVERNMENT IN PORTUGAL. BRIMELOW DOUBTED CALLAGHAN WOULD HAVE ANY PROBLEMS WITH THE POINTS OUTLINED, EXCEPT POSSIBLY PARA 3C REFTEL, SINCE THE THREAT OF POSSIBLE EXCLUSION OF PORTUGAL FROM NATO RUNS COUNTER TO HMG POLICY.

3. BAKER ADDED HE SAW SOME DIFFICULTY WITH THE WHOLE IDEA OF NEW ALLIED DEMARCHES. THEY MIGHT WELL INCREASE COSTA GOMES' DESIRE TO MOVE, BUT NOT HIS ABILITY TO MOVE. HE IS A "PRISONER OF SOMETHING," BUT WOULD THIS HELP TO "LIBERATE" HIM, BAKER ASKED. BAKER ALSO NOTED THAT THE SUGGESTED POINTS TO BE MADE WERE ALL OBVIOUS ONES WELL KNOWN TO COSTA GOMES. THE QUESTION, THEREFORE, WAS WHETHER THE ACT OF REITERATING THEM WOULD SERVE ANY PURPOSE.

4. BRIMELOW SAID THAT HE WOULD IMMEDIATELY TELEGRAPH OUR PROPOSAL TO THE BRITISH AMBASSADOR IN LISBON WHO HE THOUGHT MIGHT WANT TO DISCUSS IT WITH THE OTHER EC AMBASSADORS CONCERNED. BAKER THOUGHT THAT THE BRITISH AMBASSADOR SHOULD ALSO SOUND OUT THE A TUNES GROUP HIMSELF TO CHECK THEIR JUDGMENT RE UTILITY ANOTHER DEMARCHE AND WHETHER THEY HAD CONSIDERED POSSIBLE ADVERSE REPERCUSSIONS.

5. BRIMELOW SAID HE WOULD OF COURSE ALSO TRY TO REACH CALLAGHAN AS QUICKLY AS POSSIBLE BY TELEPHONE BUT THAT THIS MIGHT PROVE DIFFICULT, SINCE CALLAGHAN IS IN IRELAND ON VACATION AND NOT ALWAYS ACCESSIBLE. BRIMELOW THOUGHT THAT CALLAGHAN WOULD WANT TO RECEIVE BRITISH AMBASSADOR'S
SECRET

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ASSESSMENT BEFORE APPROVING FINAL INSTRUCTIONS RE POSSIBLE DEMARCHE. IN CLOSING BRIMELOW NOTED THAT CALLAGHAN ATTACHES THE GREATEST IMPORTANCE TO WORKING CLOSELY WITH THE US, AND THAT THIS WOULD PROBABLY BE HIS OVERRIDING CONSIDERATION IN REACHING DECISION.

6. COMMENT: BAKER WAS CLEARLY SKEPTICAL ABOUT THE UTILITY OF THE ENTIRE PROPOSED EXERCISE, BUT IN THE FINAL ANALYSIS WE BELIEVE BRIMELOW IS CORRECT THAT OVERRIDING CONSIDERATION WILL BE CALLAGHAN'S DESIRE TO BE AS HELPFUL TO US AS POSSIBLE. GIVEN DIFFICULTY OF REACHING CALLAGHAN IN IRELAND AND EVIDENT INCLINATION OF FCO TO SOUND OUT BRITISH AND OTHER CONCERNED AMBASSADORS IN LISBON BEFORE MAKING RECOMMENDATION TO CALLAGHAN,

QUESTION REMAINS WHETHER BRITISH DEMARCHE CAN BE EFFECTED
AS QUICKLY AS CONTEMPLATED REFTEL. WE STRESSED URGENCY
OF USG PROPOSAL. AMBASSADOR CARLUCCI MAY WISH TO FOLLOW
UP WITH BRITISH AND OTHER AMBASSADORS. RICHARDSON UNQUOTE
INGERSOLL

SECRET

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